



Skills and Knowledge For the Future

Young Parents to Be (Level 1 Award in Parenting)

January- July 2011

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1. Background

Based on the successful delivery of the 'Parents with Prospects' programme for young parents in Hackney and on the needs of the cohort recruited, SKFF delivered the following qualification:

- Level 1 Award in Parenting (50063418)

To support learners within the Foundation Learning framework we will investigate offering FS and Vocational related qualifications as determined by the cohort.

2. Project Aims and Objectives

Aim:

To develop and deliver a successful programme to prepare expectant parents for parenthood and to further progress their education, employment and training career. This will be done through a dynamic and innovative programme of studying with intensive mentoring delivered primarily by young people who are parents with similar life experiences to the participants.

Objective:

The cohort of young people would be 12 to 15 as a maximum. It is intended to offer 3 modes of delivery to suit the individuals.

- Short intensive programme with a full time commitment from the young person for the duration
- Intensive starts with longer term and distance learning element for young people who may give birth during the programme
- A longer term part time delivery for young people who are already engaged in some form of EET activity

3. Projects Delivery

Recruitment Process

The recruitment process was a joint partnership with Hackney Community College, Lindens Children Centre and Midwife Consultants who will support the marketing of the programme. Links were made with Young Dads TV; the organisation runs a project for new dads related to media, i.e. making short videos and social media. Flyers were designed by Hackney Community College and SKFF disseminated to all local youth centres, children centres and Midwives Consultants. SKFF devised an email marketing campaign focused on schools within the boroughs of Islington, Hackney, Tower Hamlet, Newham, and Haringey targeting pupil referral and youth offending teams.

Target group

The programme targeted young expectant and existing parents between the ages of 16 and 18. Information on the ethnic background of the parents registered on the programme is available below (please see chart 1.1).

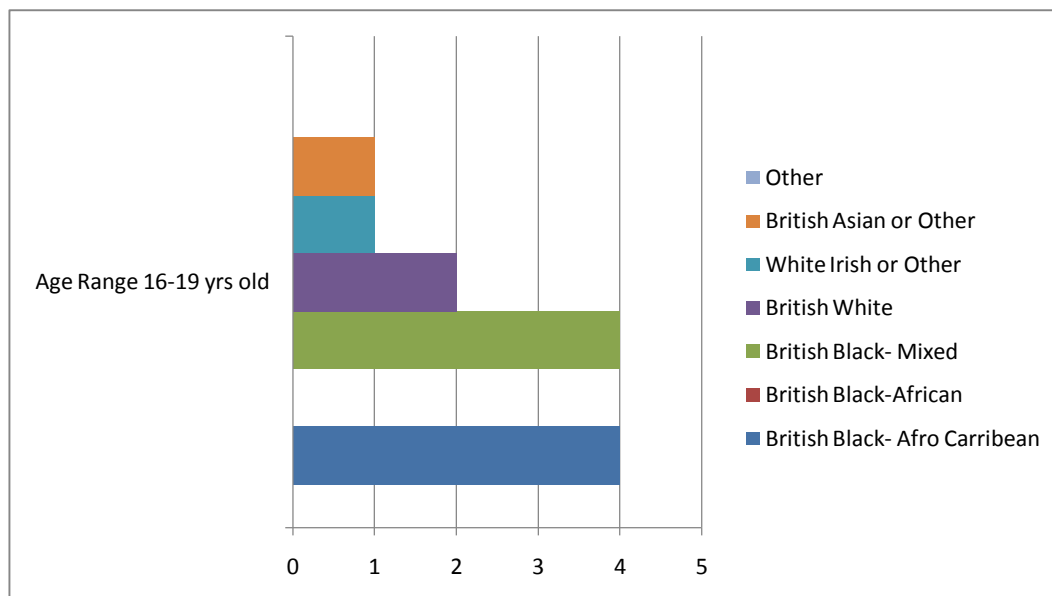


Chart 1.1.

Venue

A successful partnership link was formed with Queensbridge Sports and Community Centre as it offered a range of suitable training rooms, appropriate facilities i.e. baby changing room, lifts, recreation area, outdoor playground area and services relevant to young mothers i.e. baby gym.

Programme Delivery and Partnership Links

Programme delivery:

The programme was delivered over a period of 19 weeks and consisted of the following components:

- Week 1 and 2: Information Sessions and Recruitment
- Week 3: Induction and Initial assessment; Healthy Diets
- Week 4: Encouraging Children to eat healthily
- Week 5: Making a story time resource
- Week 6: Distance Learning, Making a story sack
- Week 7: Weaning and Teething and Guest Speaker (Community Nursery Nurse)
- Week 8: Examples of Books and Reading with Children, Benefits of Reading to Children
- Week 9: Tiny Talk, Methods of non-verbal communication and signing with your baby;
- Week 10: Presentation of Story Sack, Completion of Units 1 and 3
- Week 11: IV visit, Discussion on Smacking and Safeguarding Children Guest Speaker (Hackney Safeguarding Children Board)
- Week 12: Distance Learning
- Week 13: Positive parenting, Knowing how to encourage positive behaviour in children
- Week 14: Child Development, Dealing with Difficult Behaviour
- Week 15: Completion of Units
- Week 16-19: Work Skills BTEC Award (Hackney Community College)

Distance learning was a continuum throughout the programme as mothers were enthused to work towards completing further units/full award.

Partnerships

Partnerships formed with SKFF proved very valuable to the successful delivery of the project, i.e. sessions delivered by health visitors, Tiny Talk and Hackney Safeguarding Board in addition to the opportunity for parents to progress onto further education or employment opportunities via Head of Student Support and Progression at Hackney Community College.

St Martin's of Tours Housing Association was integral to the mentoring support received throughout the duration of the programme. The support worker gave guidance to young mothers on matters related to finance, housing, personal issues, etc.

Pastoral care

- All young parents have been allocated support workers via St Martin's of Tours Housing Association, or they already have an established support worker;
- Hackney Community College (HCC)- on the 16th June 2011, HCC signed up 10 parents for the BTEC Work Skills Award; some of which were from previous SKFF young parent projects (6 from the current project, 4 from previous projects);

4. Key Achievements

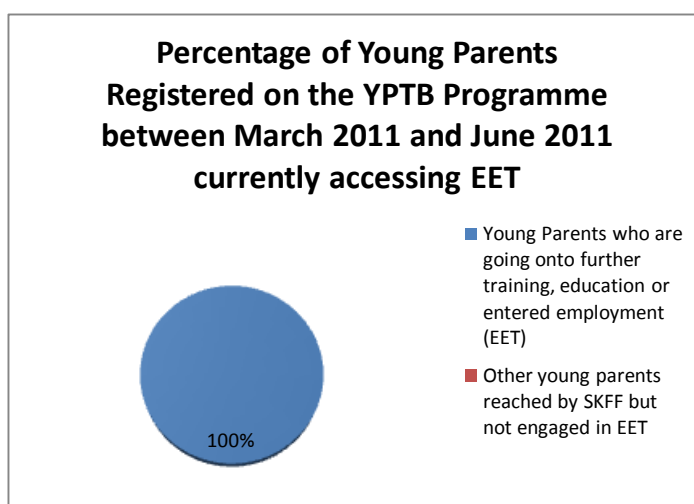
In terms of the project aims and objectives, the following were achieved:

- Achievement- out of 11 recruited, 6 were registered and participated on the programme; 6 out of 6 achieved at least 2 units of a possible 5 of the Award. 3 out of 6 learners achieved all 5 units;

- Retention- 6 out of 6 learners who were registered completed the programme;
- Learner feedback- feedback from the learners were very positive; please refer to section 10;
- Recruitment- despite the issues surrounding the recruitment process based on the support of the partner agencies, SKFF managed to recruit 11 parents. This was on the basis of going out into the community and disseminating flyers to all relevant organisations in the borough, but also including the recruitment outside Hackney. Word of mouth was paramount to the successful recruitment for this programme due to the past successes of previous young parents projects delivered by SKFF;
- Staff- the project is managed by a variety of staff, who are appropriately qualified to deliver the award and provide a range of support and mentoring services in addition to the delivery of the programme;
- Venue- as a mobile training provider, there is flexibility to deliver at various suitable venues. For this particular project, Queensbridge Sports and Community Centre as it offered a range of suitable rooms, facilities i.e. baby changing room, lifts, recreation area, outdoor playground area and services relevant to young mothers i.e. baby gym;
- Partnerships- partnerships formed with SKFF proved very valuable to the successful delivery of the project, i.e. sessions delivered by health visitors, Tiny Talk and Hackney Safeguarding Board in addition to the opportunity for parents to progress onto further education or employment opportunities via Head of Student Support and Progression at Hackney Community College;
- Creche- due to the difficulties the partner agencies had with regards to catering for mothers with young babies, SKFF registered with OFSTED to provide mobile creche provision for the project;
- Distance Learning- during the programme, it was evident that distance learning would be required due to the needs and circumstances of individual young parents i.e. advance pregnancy, financial constraints, distance travelled, etc. Staff devised appropriate distance learning resources and provided support to enable the participants to achieve, to include telephone

and email support. For example, the tutor provided a learner with the opportunity to submit her evidence electronically (this was on the basis that the candidate had access to ICT at home). For those of the participants who did not have access to internet at home, this was accessible onsite.

- Mentoring support- the programme provided an opportunity for young mothers to receive support from more experienced and more competent mothers. This proved valuable when one of the mothers contacted the team regarding concerns regarding her child, not only did she contact the team, but she also sought advice from other mothers, due to the relationships that had been formed, she felt confident to do that.
- All beneficiaries have experienced a significant increase of self-esteem, knowledge and awareness of childcare, child development and parenting skills as indicated in customer feedback.
- Out of the overall number of young parents registered on the programme, 100% of young parents (6) achieved a qualification at level 1, and are known to have be accessing EET after finishing the programme (see diagram 1.4. on the next page).



1.4.

7. Issues Arising

- Recruitment/Referral Process- the recruitment process proved difficult as there was no data available from participating agencies; agencies felt that they were unable to pass on personal information due to data protection;
- Participants- Due to the cohort recruited, we were unable to deliver the intended delivery programme Young Parents to Be (YPTB); the data that was provided by City and Hackney PCT suggested a certain number of teenage expectant mothers, however, upon recruitment, it was evident there was more existing parents;
- Venue/creche- we identified venues for the delivery of the project via our partner agencies, yet, they were unable to cater for very young babies;

8. Key Recommendations:

- Recruitment and referrals- the recruitment process requires a longer period of time to recruit sufficient numbers of participants from various zones within the borough. Additionally, clear referral pathways need to be established, to include SKFF, as an organisation registered with Information Commissioner Office, therefore, allowing access to partner agencies data;
- Sustainability- there should be sustainable funding for this type of provision as often or not SKFF has had inquiries for future projects and were unable to meet that need;
- Availability- It has been identified that the provision is required in various areas/zones of the borough, due to socio-economic factors some young parents have expressed that, although willing, they are unable to travel across zones in the borough;

10. Customer Feedback

Customer feedback was collated from the end of programme evaluation questionnaires completed by the learners registered on the PWP programme between March 2011 and June 2011.

The evidence gathered through the questionnaires shows that all learners participating in the programme found it enjoyable and described the experience in positive terms. In fact, the majority said that the programme exceeded their expectations. All participants enjoyed the programme, stating that “everyone was friendly”, they “were able to work together”, “met other young moms”, gave them “good tips on how to raise [their] child”.

Learners identified some key things that they learnt through the programme; these included the following: “dental care in young babies”, “health and safety with babies and healthy eating”, “how to communicate with my child” in different ways, “how to bond with my child” and “what makes a good parent”. Some learners pointed out that they learnt new skills such as “making toys”.

Learners also identified that the course improved their parenting skills; these are. For example, understanding how to interact with their children effectively, how to make toys that are inexpensive to “help your child socially, emotional[ly], intellectual[ly], physical[ly]”, “starting to use sign language”, weaning, being more patient, setting clear boundaries and being more aware of health and safety at home.

10.1. Feedback on customer service:

Overall, there were no complaints or negative comments received regarding the service. Learners felt that the teaching style/ delivery was fun, clear, supportive and interactive and easy to understand and follow. They felt that there was very little to change about the programme, however, it was noted by one of the learners that “more activity’s [activities] and more independent work” could be included.

Learners thought that the team/staff were all friendly, professional, helpful and supportive

10.2. Feedback on the impact of the programme in relation to NEET to EET (learner destination):

Following completion of the programme, majority of the learners were keen to progress on to further educational studies i.e. health and social care, health studies/ midwifery, early childhood studies and accounting. To summarise, post the programme, parents felt more confident and competent to undertake further studies and were keen to start within the next academic year.

To conclude, the feedback garnered through questionnaire indicated that all of the learners would happily recommend the programme to their friends.